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by Sidney Lens

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THE MONTH

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THE
Commonweal
A Weekly Review of Public Affairs, Literature, and the Arts
THIRTY-SEVENTH YEAR OF PUBLICATION

week by week

FREE SPEECH AND MOVIES

THE PROBLEM of censorship is in the news again, this time by reason of a surprising decision of the United States Supreme Court. The Warren court, which has made history with its numerous rulings in the direction of individual freedom from government restraint, has now gone on record in quite the opposite direction.

In a split decision, the Court upheld by a vote of five to four the right of the city of Chicago to exercise prior censorship over movies to be exhibited within its jurisdiction. The case in question—Times Film Corp. *v.* Chicago—involved the right of the Chicago censors to refuse a license to exhibit a film when the would-be exhibitor declined to submit the film for the censors' examination. Actually, the film over which the case was fought was a perfectly harmless version of Mozart's "Don Giovanni," and there seems no doubt that it would have been approved if it had been submitted for inspection. The exhibitors refused to submit the film, it is clear, in order to manufacture a test case for the Supreme Court on the whole question of the constitutionality of movie censorship. Their plan succeeded to the extent of forcing the Court to rule on the issue, but the decision was obviously not what they had hoped for.

Writing for the majority, Justice Tom C. Clark said that the question before the Court was "whether the ambit of constitutional protection includes complete and absolute freedom to exhibit, at least once, any and every kind of motion picture." Since the film in the case had not been shown, no one could tell what was in it, Justice Clark continued. It might contain "the basest type of pornography, or incitement to riot, or forceful overthrow of government." "It is not for this court," he went on, "to limit the state in its selection of the remedy it deems most effective to cope with such a problem" [the showing of obscene films] except when it could be demonstrated that there were "unreasonable strictures on individual liberty resulting from its application in particular circumstances."

Among the dissenters, Chief Justice Warren was joined by Justices Black, Douglas and Brennan in questioning whether the logic of the majority decision could be confined to movies. "The court in no way explains why moving pictures should be treated differently than any other form of expression," said Chief Justice Warren, and its opinion "comes perilously close to holding that not only may motion pictures be censored but that a licensing scheme may also be applied to newspapers, books and periodicals, radio, television, public speeches and every other medium of expression."

CENSORSHIP is a very delicate and difficult business, and it is not helped by the extremists on both sides—those who think that every piece of obscenity published is a blow struck for freedom and the vigilantes who would ban first and ask questions afterward. As Justice Clark noted, every city has "the duty to protect its people against the dangers of obscenity in the public exhibition of motion pictures." But the steps taken to protect the people against the evil of obscenity must not bring about the danger of a worse evil—the loss of the precious and perishable commodity of free speech—and this is the danger which the dissenting opinion discusses. Weighing the evils and the dangers in the question of prior film censorship, we would have to align ourselves with the dissenters.

We think Chief Justice Warren is on strong ground when he points out that the majority opinion gives no explanation for its special treatment of movies among all the various communications

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media. In 1952, it must be remembered, the Supreme Court ruled in the "Miracle" case that moving pictures were covered by the guarantees of free speech and free press in the First and Fourteenth Amendments.

The argument that movies are somehow "specially censorable"—even though prior censorship of all other media is unconstitutional—we find unconvincing. The mass audience, the vividness of the communication, the tender age of those exposed to movies—all these conditions are met, to a greater or lesser degree, by other forms of modern communication. As the minority opinion asked, why should movies be singled out for government censorship by a society which fears and abhors state-controlled press or radio or communications systems generally?

As for the danger of removing pre-censorship from movies altogether, we can only say that it is a danger to be faced. It might be, as Justice Clark charged, that without prior censorship any and every kind of film could be shown at least once. But if law-enforcement officials are prompt and conscientious in arresting and prosecuting those who exhibit obscene films this danger is not likely to be great.

Even more important, such a procedure puts the burden of proof not on the individual, as does the system of prior licensing, but on the state, which is where this burden belongs. Any conflict between the state and a citizen is an unequal one by definition, since the state has virtually limitless resources of funds, personnel and equipment in its police and legal agencies. Nowadays especially, one would think, our concern would not be to strengthen the already vast powers of government but to safeguard the rights of the individual citizen who for one reason or another arouses the displeasure of the governmental colossus.

It is, we think, unreasonable and unjust to put restraints on individual freedom because of what the individual *might* do, and particularly in the extra-sensitive area of free speech and free communication. With Justice Warren and the other dissenters, we fear that the power to withhold a license from a film—or a book or anything else—without the necessity to show cause or even to give a reason, is not in the best interests of a healthy democracy. We are surprised at the inconsistency of the many avowed champions of individual rights who are hailing this latest Court decision. What they are now cheering, it seems to us, is tighter state control of the very lifeline of the democracy they cherish.

READYING FOR "TAKE-OFF?"

AS ITS SECOND Five-Year Plan draws to a close, India functions more prominently as a (large-scale) pilot model for the underdeveloped nations of Asia and other parts of the world. The structure of its economy does not provide as sharp a contrast with that of Soviet Russia or of Communist China as does the primarily free enterprise system of the United States. India has a mixed economy, with government ownership and operation of most heavy industry, the largest mines, railroads, power plants and irrigation projects—and with hopes of developing an oil industry.

But one characteristic of the past five years has been the burgeoning of smaller private industries and the steady growth of a new managerial class in India. Preconceptions have given way in two directions: the State has gained increasing confidence in local businessmen, while the latter have come to find official attitudes considerably more understanding and cooperative than they had expected. One indication of all this is the fact that Indian private capital has exceeded its goal for new investment for the past five years by forty per cent.

Another less happy trend has gone counter to Indian expectations. The anti-colonialist aspiration was to replace foreign management and technicians in much shorter order than has now proved possible. The Nehru government recognizes this fact and, for example, is seeking hundreds more German, Russian and American technicians to supervise its new steel mills.

When to all this is added the incentives offered by New Delhi to foreign capital (in joint ventures it can represent two-thirds of the total invested), the essential differences between the Chinese and Indian economies will be seen to be very marked. The "Socialist bias" of present-day India, even in economic terms, contrasts strongly with the Marxism of Communist China. Political opposition may be far less feasible in India than it is in the United States, but except for their daily struggle for subsistence the people of India live in comparative freedom. The success of the effort to raise Indian living standards through agrarian development and industrialization is a matter of vital international concern.

With perhaps four-fifths, or better, of the overall goal for 1956-61 attaining fulfillment, what are the main objectives of the third Five-Year plan? The government plans to put new emphasis on increasing the national food output, so that by 1966 India will become self-sufficient in food. (In the

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meantime it is counting heavily on American surpluses.) Such hopes have as one base the extent of the India village program, which to date has brought about reforms of one sort or another in some four hundred thousand villages. Ability to feed its own millions also depends on a shift from millet to rice and wheat production which has already begun and the success of plans for the new tractor and fertilizer plants.

One of India's greatest needs is that of experienced technical and managerial personnel. As with the food production program, major errors can have calamitous results, and there are still far too few Indian nationals with first-hand experience in their specific productive activities, which are matters of life and death for their native land. Yet the goals of an annual three per cent increase in production per capita in India involves such feats as doubling the power output and increasing tractor production four-fold and certain chemicals and fertilizers six-fold. There is little margin for error.

A grave handicap at the moment is the precariously low state of India's monetary reserves. That makes its dependence on foreign capital all the more stringent. The Plan itself calls for about a billion and a third dollars in foreign loans and grants (including American food surpluses) for each of the next five years. In view of the stakes for the people of India and the world, and the solid foundations the citizens of that neutral nation have been building in the past decade, the nations of the West should not find this sum beyond their imagination or capabilities.

REACTIONS TO "THE THIRD REICH"

NEITHER GERMANY nor the rest of the world has yet come wholly to terms with Nazism and the gross evils that were perpetrated in its name during the second World War. All the great questions still wait for an answer. If they are sometimes forgotten and seem to be laid permanently to rest, it takes only a slight incident to call them forth once more. Beyond the level of brute fact, we have yet to give satisfactory answers to questions of how the terrible events took place, how the guilt and responsibility are to be assigned, and what now shall be made of that terrible period of history.

Writing from Bonn, Sydney Gruson, the N. Y. *Times* correspondent, recently told of the German reaction to a T.V. series called "The Third Reich." The series is designed to give an open, candid account of the rise and rule of the Third Reich. It attempts to show that the "good" aspects of Hitler's regime—such as full employment and great highway programs—were inseparable from the weak and evil aspects of that regime. It recalls to the Germans their early acceptance and approval of Nazi rule.

The reaction to this series has been divided. In West Germany, where forty per cent of the population was born after Hitler's accession to power in 1933, the younger people are interested and impressed by this series. Schools have requested copies of the film so that it might be shown to classes of German children. But if favorable reactions are found among the younger people, they run counter to the responses of other groups of older, influential Germans. The veterans of the Waffen S. S., for example, which was an elite fighting corps under Hitler, have protested the series. It had been learned, they complained in their monthly magazine, that one installment planned for the future would concentrate on the activities of the Waffen S. S. and compare them with the sadistic activities of concentration camp forces and the Gestapo.

"We certainly do not deem German television competent," they wrote, "to pass any judgment on the Waffen S. S. There were phenomena among the Waffen S. S. that deserved severe criticism. But such shortcomings must not be used now to defame a large section of our people, men who did their duty with a degree of personal courage and self-sacrifice that was also recognized by our enemies." The article went on to say that criticism of the organization would serve only Khrushchev, and it urged all S. S. veterans to write or phone the studio to object to criticism.

Such a reaction must be profoundly discouraging to anyone with some knowledge of the time. Even the bloodless vocabulary—"phenomena," "deserved severe criticism," "shortcomings"—recalls that of the Third Reich, with its cool discussion of "problems" and "the final solution." Such a response emphasizes the need for just such programs as "The Third Reich," for there is clearly a difference in knowledge and feeling between the generations in Germany, an opposition that could give rise to much greater confusion than already exists.

There is need, in this country as well as in Germany, for constant attention to Germany's recent past, not in order to use it as a weapon in present-day disputes, the Eichmann case for example, but in order to enlarge our personal and national comprehension of an evil that might too easily be forgotten in the surge of modern history.

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A CATHOLIC IN THE WHITE HOUSE

LIKE MILLIONS of other Americans, I watched the inauguration of the new President on television. It was a memorable and moving experience.

For any citizen of this country, the historic transfer of power from one President to another and from one political party to the other is always impressive. But for me, a Catholic as well as an American, the inauguration of John F. Kennedy was doubly so. I don't see how any Catholic could fail to feel something of this, even among those who preferred Vice President Nixon last November.

I know there were Catholics who feared the prospect of a Catholic President, on the grounds that it was "too soon," that the country was not ready for it, that all Catholics would be blamed for any mistake a Catholic President might make. I was not among them. The breakthrough had to come; as far as I was concerned, the sooner it came the better.

If anyone needs the reassurance, this does not mean that I would have voted for a Catholic no matter what he stood for. If in this election Mr. Nixon had been the Catholic, Mr. Kennedy would have got my vote just the same. But with that on the record, I can say I am very happy with the way things turned out.

During the last year I spoke a good many times before Protestant and Jewish groups. As the election came closer and closer, questions from the floor on the Catholic-for-President issue grew more and more numerous. This was natural enough, and I had no objections, for I have always thought Catholics should face such questions frankly. But it did seem to me that many of the questioners seriously underestimated the individual Catholic's emotional stake in this matter.

I had no hesitations then and I have none now in explaining why I felt deeply on this issue, and not just because of Mr. Kennedy, although I supported him with enthusiasm. But I was always somewhat surprised that any explanation was necessary.

Most Catholics in this country are the children or grandchildren of immigrants, and immigrants who did not receive a very hearty welcome at that—witness the anti-Catholic riots which took place in the United States not so many decades ago. It is obvious even today that a considerable body of anti-Catholic feeling persists in America, and few Catholics are able to go through life untouched by it, just as it is a rare Jew who can escape the bitter fact of anti-Semitism.

I am as ready as any man to admit Catholic shortcomings. But every Catholic knows there are jobs he cannot get because of his religion. He knows there are clubs which will not admit him for the same reason. He knows, especially if he studied at a Catholic university, that there are colleges where he is not welcome to teach.

As a Catholic, I too know all these things; I would have to be completely insensitive not to. They are part of the facts of life, and I have to live with them. But no one can persuade me to like them.

In the same way, from childhood on I heard it said that any American boy could grow up to be President, as long as he was not a Catholic or a Jew or, it should have been added, a Negro. No matter how often I heard this dictum, though, I could never reconcile myself to the easy way people accepted it as a fact. And no one, certainly, could ever make me believe that such exclusion from full participation in the nation's life was anything but a betrayal of the American idea.

Stripped to its essence, the Catholic-for-President argument, it seemed to me, came down to this: do we Americans accept the Constitution, the whole Constitution, or not? My own feelings on the "religious issue" were quite simple. There were Protestants and Jews I would not vote for, just as there were Catholics I would not vote for. But I would not vote against them simply because they were Protestants or Jews, and I could not accept easily the notion that people would vote against a Catholic simply because he was a Catholic.

That is why the inauguration of John F. Kennedy was so important to me, as an American and as a Catholic. To emerge from second-class citizenship is no small thing; yet I think that is what we have done. And if this event is a memorable one for Catholics, it must be counted even more as a victory for the American idea.

As for those who feared that a Catholic President might use the power of his office to advance "Catholic interests," I am convinced they will soon come to see that their fears were groundless. Many Catholics have long felt unfairly treated on the school-aid issue; no one should expect them to change their minds simply because a Catholic is now President. But I do not believe that Catholics will under a Catholic President ask for anything they could not ask under a Protestant or a Jew. And if any were foolish enough to do so, I have no doubt about the reception they would receive.

Unless I am mightily mistaken, the new President's words for all his fellow-Americans will always be those he used in his Inaugural Address: "Ask not what your country can do for you—ask what you can do for your country." This is as it should be, certainly, and I for one do not believe Catholics would have it otherwise.

JAMES O'GARA.

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Prospects for Labor

Aside from the election, 1960 was the most dismal year for the labor movement since the end of the war

by SIDNEY LENS

THERE IS a feeling among labor leaders now that tomorrow will be better. After the lean years of the Eisenhower era, when the momentum of the union movement came to dead-end, the electoral victory of John Kennedy on November 8th was like the sight of water to a thirst-crazed Bedouin.

Not that Kennedy was "labor's boy." On the contrary, Hubert Humphrey and Adlai Stevenson were much closer, in tone and in philosophy, to A.F.L.-C.I.O. officialdom. But the hard-headed men who run the unions wanted a taste of success. Humphrey and two-time loser Stevenson just couldn't win; Kennedy, they thought, could. As one auto unionist put it: "We're sick of glorious defeats, what we need is an inglorious victory."

As the campaign progressed from apathy to crescendo the union brass convinced itself that it was supporting a Moses to lead it out of the wilderness. By September the chilly reaction to Lyndon Johnson as running mate and the misgivings about Kennedy's own moderateness were gone. A now-or-never feeling pervaded the atmosphere. Compared to past campaigns the A.F.L.-C.I.O. effort was yeoman. Labor spent $1.7 million and used many hundreds of full-time organizers. And when the inglorious victory finally came, despite its minute margin, there was a general feeling of relief that labor now had a friend where it counted.

If ever labor needed such a friend, this was the time, for there is little doubt that, election aside, 1960 was the most dismal year for the movement since the end of the war. It wasn't merely that the momentum had been lost and the tide had been turned back, but by now the conclusion was inescapable that something fundamental was happening to labor relations—and from the unions' point of view it wasn't good. The vision of dead-end came in full focus to a movement that had been marking time for a decade. It was clear even to the most optimistic in 1960 that "something had to be done" and done drastically.

The visible portion of this *cul de sac* was a reversal in three areas: First, 1960 brought the first round of bargaining since the war in which labor blazed no new social trails. Second, this was the first time since 1945 that management attacked the principle of an annual raise, and made it stick in at least one important segment of industry. Third, it was the first time that the cost-of-living raise, won in 1948, was put into cold storage on a fairly wide basis.

In the post-World War II era, organized labor, weak in the political arena (compared to union movements elsewhere), developed a novel bargaining technique. Sparked by Walter Reuther, it evolved a strategy of interlinking collective bargaining with social issues. Theoretically the bargaining table was a place where, until then, you fought for higher wages, shorter hours, seniority rights and the like. What Reuther and his allies did was to extend the area of discussion to include social in-security as well. In every bargaining round a new social principle was established. Immediately after the end of hostilities the term "fringe benefits" was added to the industrial relations lexicon. The federal government had no health insurance such as prevailed in all other advanced industrial nations, but union after union won at the bargaining table some kind of employer-paid hospitalization, medical insurance and sick pay.

IN 1945 Reuther presented to General Motors the radical idea of freezing prices as a precondition for a union agreement. G.M.—and others—were able to ground this proposal in 1945-6. But three years later the dynamic auto union leader attacked the question of inflation from the opposite end. If prices were not to be restricted then labor had to be compensated wage-wise for any rises in the cost of living. This time G.M. reacted favorably and the "escalator clause" became an-

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other new term in labor-management jargon. Each three months the parties checked the Bureau of Labor Statistics cost-of-living index, and if it had gone up—as it usually did—the workers on the line received another penny or two an hour in raises. Thus for the first time in American history living standards for the organized workers went up steadily: the escalator clause protected the value of the wage dollar, while the annual improvement factor raise (usually two to two and a half per cent) added an *absolute* increase. Not all workers were covered by this escalation principle, but enough so that it pulled the whole wage level up to ever higher peaks. If labor could not stop inflation, at least it was now guaranteed protection against its stinging blows.

In 1950 and again in 1955 two new social principles were put forward at the bargaining table: supplementary pensions and supplementary unemployment compensation. Social security and jobless pay, passed in the 1930's, were originally intended to guarantee the worker more of his regular wages than they actually did in the 1940's. The erosion of the value of the dollar cut these two social benefits appreciably, and with Congress sitting on its hands, Reuther, David McDonald, *et al,* put the pressure on at the point where their strength was greatest—the bargaining table. Supplementary pensions were won during one round—with Congress finally taking the hint and raising social security itself soon after; and supplementary unemployment compensation, to be added to the state jobless pay to make about two-thirds of the regular wage, was won the next time.

When the 1958-60 bargaining round got under way, the social evil crying most for solution was unemployment. To cut into the ranks of jobless, the auto union adopted a program for cutting the work week. The old labor slogan of a thirty-hour week with forty-hours pay was dusted off and prepared for the leading role on the bargaining stage. America was then in the third past-war recession, with more than six per cent of the labor force jobless and automation cutting deeply into factory employment. Spreading the work by cutting the work week was a clearly indicated solution. If the whole work force were to cut its work week by three hours there would no longer be any jobless. But in this last bargaining round labor was unable to achieve its goal. The demand for a shorter week was dropped first by auto, then by steel, and finally by the others.

Labor in 1958-60 had clearly failed to win any new social objectives. And with this setback management took heart to roll back the line even further.

The hundred and sixteen-day steel strike, and the eighty-day Taft-Hartley cooling-off period, ended with an indecisive victory for the steel union. In the process the escalator clause was virtually jettisoned. The new agreement limited cost-of-living raises to merely three cents an hour each year, and it cut into this figure by providing that if insurance costs were higher than anticipated they would be taken out of escalator raises. In practice this has meant no more cost-of-living boosts.

Later in 1960 the railroad unions, with about 800,000 members, and Jim Carey's electrical union were forced to give up this principle entirely. Carey's organization took a strike at General Electric partially in an effort to continue the escalator, but it turned out to be the most abortive walkout in a major industry since the war. After a couple of weeks it ended in rout, with the union accepting pretty much what the company had offered prior to the strike. *Business Week* could boast that "the 'escalator principle' . . . received a serious blow in 1960 bargaining; it may be on its way out."

ANOTHER principle that may be on its way out is the annual raise. Until now almost all of the eighteen million union men and women of organized labor received a wage boost every year. The G.E. settlement was the first break in this principle. Under its terms the electrical manufacturing industry spaces wage increases every eighteen months, instead of every twelve. A few months after this event the oil industry proposed a spacing of every two years. Whether this will hold remains to be seen.

Nor was this all. The bleak atmosphere of labor relations was intensified by other circumstances. One was the emergence into the open of a new form of management solidarity: strike insurance. It has always been known that certain groups of employers have secret pacts to underwrite each other's strike costs. When the representatives of the Chicago Restaurant Association testified before the McClellan Committee they conceded that they had established a fund for this purpose. A restaurant on strike received "strike benefits" from the Association. A strike against a Pittsburgh department store some time ago lasted for more than a year because other employers across the country, anxious to check the tide of unionism, were picking up the tab for their aggrieved brother.

But such funds were never publicized and could only be guessed. In the last year or so, however, management has become more bold. The airlines announced, without so much as an apology, that they were going to help each other in case of strikes. When the unions protested this was a monopolistic practice their plea was disregarded by the Civil Aeronautics Board. During 1960, when the Pennsylvania Railroad employees struck for the first time in decades, the carrier's losses were cushioned by strike insurance anted-up by other carriers. Similar funds and arrangements now exist in a growing number of industries.

Such solidarity on the part of management contrasts sharply with that of the labor movement. Dozens of

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unions, for instance, signed with General Electric, on G.E.'s terms, while the largest union in the field, representing seventy thousand workers, the International Union of Electrical Employees, was still holding out. G.E. could argue in scores of newspaper advertisements that it had come to terms with many other organizations; why not I.U.E.?

There was no single attempt in 1960 to smash a large national union. But the defensive stance of the labor movement was evident everywhere. There were fewer strikes than the year before, but there were a number of long ones and quite a few that ended without a feeling of victory: the Wilson strike, the copper strikes in the west, the J. I. Case strike, and so on. Furthermore, the government continued to wave an old stick against labor. Eight A.F.L.-C.I.O. textile unionists started prison terms on a "conspiracy" charge resulting from the bitter Harriet-Henderson strike in North Carolina. This conspiracy doctrine, used against labor in its formative years in the early nineteenth century, has been dusted off for the first time in many decades. The independent Mine-Mill union has appealed a conviction on this charge of some of its leaders; unionists in the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union are under indictment, and so are others.

As for organizational efforts in 1960, they were ponderous and relatively ineffective. The day of the quick union victory seemed to be gone. In the first nine months of the year the A.F.L.-C.I.O. won about one-half of all the Labor Board elections in which it participated. It gained the right to represent 132,000 more workers. But impressive as this may sound in a vacuum it means that the unions are hardly holding their own. At the rate of 150,000 new members a year it will take about 170 years to organize the twenty-six million potential unionists who do not yet carry union cards—and that does not take into account the process of attrition. Automation, shut-down of old plants, and other factors are reducing ranks by at least as much as, and probably more than, these Labor Board gains.

In one area the A.F.L.-C.I.O. did show an imaginative spark in 1960. A well-financed campaign to aid the migrant farm laborer in California enjoyed some successes. In one place after another the threat of a strike at harvest time resulted in higher pay rates for the unfortunate farm laborers whose national average wage is but $900 a year. The unions did not try to enroll the workers into permanent organizations; they were content to create the good-will capital that might make large scale unionization possible in the years to come. If these efforts are followed up in 1961, they can lead to the first major organizing breakthrough in a long time.

But the record of 1960 stands as a rearguard action to hold thinning ranks rather than a frontal attack to expand them substantially. Viewed even superficially, 1960 was not a heart-warming year for the labor movement.

IF THESE surface setbacks were all that the House of Labor had to contend with, the prospect for the future might be better. If *intrinsic* union power remained as strong as it was yesterday then the partial loss of an escalator principle or the stand-still in organization efforts might not be so dire. Unfortunately, in the relations between labor and management a new dimension has been added to those of the past—and a new specter. The major industries are now surfeited with an excess of capacity. Many can produce in six to eight months enough to supply the nation for a full year.

What this does to labor's bargaining power is clearly visible. It cuts it to shreds. Consider, for instance, the plight of the steel workers. Of slightly more than a million members, 150,000 are unemployed and 350,000 more are working only part-time. Unemployment is so great that the supplementary unemployment benefit funds have been seriously drained, and in line with contractual provisions benefits are being cut twenty-five per cent.

During much of 1960 steel production hovered at the fifty and fifty-five per cent levels. Instead of producing their capacity of 140 million tons a year the mills were working at a seventy-five million ton level. The national market evidently calls for no more. Favorable tax allowances, which made it possible for corporations to amortize new plants in five years instead of twenty or thirty, and rapid technological improvement have made it possible for the steel corporations to produce in seven months enough for a whole year. Translated into the power terms of collective bargaining this means that if the union should strike next time around it would have to be on the picket line for fully five months before the corporations lost even a dime's worth of business. Prior to a threatened strike management could stoke the mills at full force for the preceding year and just sit tight while the men and their union exhausted themselves.

The same situation exists in a host of other industries. In 1955 the auto industry produced seven million cars. Its capacity today is at least nine or ten million, but its actual production is only in the neighborhood of six. The auto magnates can wait out a strike for forty per cent of the year, five months, before they feel any pinch or suffer any real loss. Our country is again troubled with an excess of capacity; billions of dollars of productive facilities lie idle while the nation itself suffers shortages of hospitals, schoolrooms, clinics, roads, low-cost homes. And idle machines are accompanied not only by idle hands, but by weakened unions.

The losses that labor suffered in 1960 were thus not merely "things in themselves" but symptoms of an

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inner disturbance, a sort of lava on the edge of a deep volcano. Within the volcano is a churning crisis for labor that no one knows quite how to resolve. "Let's face it," a top union official told his staff prior to the elections, "we can't win major strikes nowadays. We've got to concentrate on politics."

This realization no doubt is fanning out through labor's consciousness: that economic action is rapidly losing importance to political action. How are the unions to match power with corporate goliaths when excess capacity and strike insurance make managements' position so much stronger?

The malaise of labor manifested itself in a number of different ways prior to the election campaign. A few lesser leaders in the hierarchy expressed themselves in favor of turning labor's back on both parties. A. Philip Randolph, the only Negro vice-president in A.F.L.-C.I.O., refused to approve Kennedy's candidacy. Albert Hayes, president of the million-strong machinists' union, expressed what was no doubt on many minds—particularly in the secondary echelons—when he said in September:

"We of organized labor are far too often given only the choice of the lesser of two evils"—implying that he considered neither candidate a strong friend of labor. Hayes was particularly bitter about the unity of Northern liberals with Southern Dixiecrats. "How can any intelligent person," he asked, "find a justifiable compromise between the diametrically opposed views of the Southern reactionaries and the Northern liberals in the Democratic Party?"

Hayes projected the possibility for the future that American labor, like its Canadian counterpart which recently organized a third party, might take the same road.

But the third party idea, an issue for labor since unions were formed, is obviously not on the immediate agenda. Not even the rudimentary steps of forging independent ward and precinct organizations of workers seem to be imminent.

For the moment at least, in the warm afterglow of an inglorious victory, the labor hierarchs will rest their burden on President Kennedy's shoulders. Where they will go from there lies with the oracles of history.

FUTURE OF THE COLON

Guarantees in Algeria

by ROBERT BARRAT

SEVERAL PARTIES and organizations of the French Left, including the Socialists, have just published an appeal which calls for guarantees for the European minority in Algeria should negotiations begin between the French Government and the Algerian nationalists. "At a moment when bitterness and despair threaten to overwhelm a European population whose profound anxiety is being systematically exploited, it is necessary that certain basic guarantees be made which every individual and every ethnic or ideological minority have a right to expect—guarantees which can be achieved only after an honest confrontation of the interests and aspirations of all the parties involved." France suddenly finds itself in the midst of a vigorous public debate.

The Moslem demonstrations of last December have roused the French in Algeria from a dream in which they were enveloped by the presence of an army of eight hundred thousand men. Torn between fury and despair, they have come face to face with the inevitable: either they must leave, or come to an understanding with a people whom they have, by every effort, sought to keep in a condition of serfdom. The mirage of Algerian integration with the homeland, which sustained their morale in 1958, has evaporated. What can be the immediate prospect for them in an impoverished country in which their former enemies will have been called, in all probability, to assume all or partial power?

Unquestionably the problem of guarantees will constitute a major obstacle which could cause the negotiations to bog down for a long period. What are the terms of the problem? On the one hand there are a million Europeans who on the whole have enjoyed a living standard comparable to that of the inhabitants of Western Europe. On the other, there are nine million Moslems whose per capita income does not average three per cent of the income of the Algerian Europeans.

The growing education of the young and the profound social and psychological convulsions which the war produced among the Moslems have made profound reforms in the socio-economic structure of Algeria absolutely necessary. Whatever political authority governs the country tomorrow, there will be no lessening of the determination of the Algerian to escape the universe of misery which has been his lot up to now. He aspires to employment and responsibilities, to see established

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in his country a regime characterized by equality and social justice.

THE PROSPECTS for the immediate future in this regard are, however, harrowing. In Algeria today there are eight hundred thousand urban unemployed and in rural areas nearly two million unemployed out of two million six hundred thousand able-bodied men. The Constantine Plan proposes to create in five years some four hundred and seventy-five thousand new jobs in agriculture, three hundred thousand in Algerian cities and one hundred thousand in France itself for Algerian émigrés. If these goals were fully realized, which is doubtful, they would prove woefully inadequate, for during the same period over six hundred thousand young Algerians will enter the labor market.

The Algeria of tomorrow will succeed in overcoming this endemic misery, anarchy and a permanent state of war only if two conditions are fulfilled. Foreign financial aid on a vast scale will be needed to enable Algeria to equip itself for industrialization and to create still more new jobs. Secondly, there will have to be fundamental reforms in the social and economic orders. Even if substantial foreign aid would effect marked improvement in ten or twenty years, the Algerian Moslems are psychologically unable to continue to live side by side with a European minority as privileged as it now is. The European colon's average holding of over three hundred acres is many times that of his Moslem neighbor. The discrepancy is further marked by the fact that four-fifths of Algerian officials are European.

Besides agrarian reform and the Algerianization of the public services, the mobilization of two million unemployed according to methods copied from Communist China will be among the inevitable consequences of the coming to political power, even after some delays, of the Algerian people. The Europeans have misgivings about such a prospect and rebel against this unkind turn of fate. They are beginning to suggest either some sharing of their privileges, which scarcely seems feasible, or the still more impossible preservation of their privileges within the framework of an independent Algeria.

The attitude of the Algerian F.L.N. (National Liberation Front) regarding the status of the Europeans in Algeria has always been clear. They will be invited to choose between Algerian citizenship—under which they would be subject, as all their compatriots, to the laws of the future State—or the status of aliens. If this attitude seems totalitarian, it at least has the merit of logic. The time of capitulations has passed. Any status granted which would tend to confirm them in their situation as a privileged minority in the midst of the disinherited Moslem masses would sooner or later condemn the Europeans to exile. There is no future for them in Algeria unless they accept to the fullest extent the lot, whether happy or desperate, of their Moslem compatriots.

HENCE it would seem that there would be two ways of working toward guarantees for the Europeans now living and working in Algeria. One program would provide, in the next five years, for the repatriation and partial or total indemnification of from three hundred thousand to four hundred thousand of Europeans—agricultural bosses, unskilled workers, employees, petty functionaries and those engaged in small business. France could absorb them without difficulty, and such an increase in manpower could have a beneficial effect on the national economy, as the examples of West Germany and the Low Countries have demonstrated. The cost of such repatriation would not exceed that of eighteen months of Algerian war.

The problem of political status is more delicate and will require considerable study. The Europeans will need several years leeway before having to make up their minds on the question of citizenship. It is an issue that will require them to reach an understanding with the leaders of the Algerian nationalists. Perhaps a double privileged status could be adopted, not only for the French in Algeria but also for the four hundred and fifty thousand Algerians now living in France. This would permit both these groups to keep the citizenship of their country of origin. In their country of residence they would enjoy all rights but the political, and the power to hold office.

In other words, a Frenchman in Algeria would continue to vote with the French electoral body but could become a member of the Algerian Economic Council, a trade union leader, an administrator for Social Security, or a member of such agencies as chambers of commerce or of agriculture. The same situation would exist for the Algerians in France. Such a solution would be more readily acceptable to the Algerian nationalists than that of double nationality, for in Algerian eyes, the latter would involve a threat to the sovereignty and integrity of the future Algerian State.

The sudden interest shown by public opinion and the French press in the problem of guarantees shows that considerable headway has been made on the Algerian question in the course of but a few months. Deputies and men of the Right are now discussing the question of negotiation openly, a question which a short time ago concerned only the "defeatists." The way is open before de Gaulle. He can cross the Rubicon, by addressing to Ferhat Abbas a straightforward invitation to meet face to face without prior conditions to negotiate the terms for peace. Perhaps reasons of character or of prestige will still delay, if only for a few hours, the ending of a struggle which has so clearly become "absurd and to no purpose."

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A Non-Orwellian Russia

by ROBERT BERTRAM

A YEAR OR so ago a French student who had been studying in Moscow smuggled the manuscript of a long story by a young Russian writer into France, where it was translated and published. This in itself is a significant event. It is very rare indeed that Westerners get the opportunity to read the "underground" literature that Russians are suspected of writing. But this remarkable story, written by a man who signs himself with the pseudonym Abram Tertz, and recently published in America as a book under the title *The Trail Begins,* possesses extraordinary intrinsic interest. It contains an account of certain little-known events that immediately followed the death of Stalin, and a description of the life of Russian officialdom, or Soviet Philistia, which in several scenes is magnificent. Moreover, it employs modern literary devices which certainly are unlike the frozen formularized conventions of Socialist Realism, the official literary doctrine of the Soviet Union.

I have been reading the American reviews of *The Trail Begins,* and in most of them it is easy to detect a note of encouraged surprise that, despite everything, so unorthodox a talent as Tertz's has managed to survive in the Soviet Union. Some reviewers were intrigued by the story's literary devices and allowed themselves to wonder whether they could be taken as evidence that Russian writers somehow have kept alive the spirit of experimentation. Whenever I read a fresh review I was reminded of a conversation I heard last year between two young people I knew in Leningrad.

One of them told of a young writer he had met who had written some stories with a tragic cast about the problems of old age. The stories delighted him. But the cause of his delight, as I learned, was not so much that a quite young writer had the ability to enter the minds of old people, as that the stories were written in a realistic style. In Soviet Russia, where formal literary experimentation once led to exile or annihilation, and is now more mercifully condemned as "bourgeois decadence," this young acquaintance found the straight realistic prose a refreshing change from the highly personalized surrealist poetry and prose he had become accustomed to reading.

The fact is that young Russian writers, even some who practice their craft publicly in conformity with the official literary canon, surreptitiously write whatever has personal or artistic meaning for them "for the desk drawer," as they say in Russian. And what they write is often very like *The Trail Begins.*

WHATEVER honest intellectual life there is in Russia exists under the surface, and though the life of the mind there may be in hiding, it is in essential respects as sophisticated and modern as that of the West. I think it is the generally accepted opinion in the West that Russian intellectuals now, just as in the past, are two steps behind us and forever foolishly tripping over themselves in a frantic effort to catch up. This opinion often is expressed about Russian painters —not about the conformist practitioners of Socialist Realism, who are at best skilled popular illustrators, but about Russia's young experimental painters. *Life* magazine did a sensational report on them last year, complete with color illustrations of their works, and unjustly described the canvases they are painting as typical of those done in Paris fifty years ago. The Russians involved were quite offended. And the truth is that the range of styles in which Russians paint privately, "for their souls," as they say, is quite as wide as that in contemporary Western art.

It goes without saying that among these young artists, who earn their livings as illustrators or designers or even by doing realist paintings for exhibition, there are talents as original and profound as their counterparts in the West. But it is sad to report that in one respect enforced isolation has caused a loss in their experimental art. The native Russian modernist tradition was broken off by the Stalin terror some thirty years ago; the painters who survived either turned to other work or began painting realistically, while the museums were emptied of their earlier works. The original examples of modern Western art that Russian artists see at the rare exhibitions the Soviet government occasionally arranges with a French or an English museum are few and far between. Color reproductions are the usual examples they have of what Western painters are now doing, and since books from the West are not imported, reproductions also are rare in Russia. (I was touched when a Russian painter proudly showed me a postcard reproduction of a Miro

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painting he had stolen from the American exhibition in Moscow and now carefully kept in a bookcase among valued books.) People of discrimination in art find that the lack of living modernist tradition of long standing and a virtual absence of hand-painted examples does have unfortunate consequences. Russia's "underground" art is lacking in "guts," as one put it. What he meant was that it tends to be overly formal and devoid of the strong individual stamp of artists who define themselves against an artistic culture of highly developed personal styles.

But, apart from this, the only way in which educated Russians compare unfavorably with their Western counterparts is in their ignorance of subjects about which their leaders try to keep them in the dark. It is often taken as an occasion for amusement that the Russians who ask American tourists in the Soviet Union questions about American literature reveal a perverted notion of it. They cite either the proletarian novelists of the 1930's, and such "progressive" writers as are publishing today, or else they are likely to have a purely textbook familiarity with the established classics of the nineteenth century and those, like Hemingway and Faulkner, of the twentieth.

They have absolutely no idea of which current writers interest Americans, and it seems that for them American literature ceased to exist a couple of decades ago. What is not so often recognized is that the people who ask the questions are ordinary educated Russians, not specialists in American literature, and that their questions demonstrate a passionate desire for knowledge of the West, particularly of America, which is one of the most incredible and encouraging features of Russia today.

RUSSIANS have been so thoroughly cut off from the rest of the world for so long and are so anxious to know how other peoples live that, in a kind of paroxysm of curiosity, they are willing to take what knowledge they can get, any way they can get it. Last November an English Film Festival consisting of ten films was being given in a large theater in Leningrad. The festival ran for ten days, one day for each film. In order to accommodate everyone who wished to see them the theater ran round-the-clock "seances," and in November, in Leningrad, the northernmost metropolis of the world, people waited in long lines for tickets every hour of the day and night, or woke up all over the city during the small hours of the morning, in shifts, at two-hour intervals, to see *The Horse's Mouth* or *Wee Geordie*. Russians stampede the movie houses showing Western films for the same reason that they buy up translations of Western novels in the blink of an eye, the same reason, for that matter, that they study foreign languages with such impressive enthusiasm: they want to learn about the manners, the values, the dress of the people of that tantalizing world from which they are isolated.

This furious desire for knowledge about the West combined with the severe restrictions on the means of obtaining it produces among educated people the odd phenomenon of ignorance coexisting with a higher level of general education than is usually found in the West. As a rule, for example, Russian scientists have a wider literary education than Western scientists do. One young astronomer with whom I frequently had lunch at the university couldn't remember the German name for some exotic object, so he turned to a mathematician friend and asked to be reminded of a line from Heine in which the word occurred. The astronomer spoke English and was an avid reader of American literature. I would not say that he was atypical.

If Russians are hampered by a lack of knowledge in understanding other societies, this is not true of their own society. I went to the Soviet Union with the idea that I would be living among a different breed of people who would be separated from me intellectually by all the crooked ways of Soviet dialectical logic, and with whom I would find it difficult, if it was even possible, to communicate. I knew, of course, there would be exceptions. But, after all, last November marked the forty-third anniversary of the Russian revolution, and for all those forty-three years the Russian people have been subjected to the most steady, highly saturated and insidiously varied propaganda yet devised by governments. It was only natural to expect that all those years of propaganda had had their effect, and that the common attitudes of Russians would be sharply opposed to the attitudes of people with access to objective information.

This is the view of people living under the peculiar tyranny that George Orwell expounds in *1984*. Everybody knows the words and slogans from this book, like "double-think," and "love is hate, hate is love," or "war is peace, peace is war," that supposedly illustrate the workings and effects of a vast, effective propaganda machine. It is a view that Max Frankel, the former Moscow correspondent of the New York *Times*, took a couple of months ago in a serious of articles on the Soviet Union which appeared in the *Times*. Mr. Frankel wrote that the average Russian or, for that matter, the average university educated Russian "lacks an appreciation of the meaning of personal freedom." He implied that Russians have lived so long with the lack of freedom that they have lost the awareness of what it is.

As for me, my biggest surprise in the U.S.S.R. was to discover that no matter whom I talked to—taxi drivers, students, scholars or just plain people I met by chance on the street or in a restaurant—basically we looked at their life in the same way, and shared many values with reference to which we could evaluate it. I had come to the Soviet Union armed with moral in-

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dignation, but I soon had to lay down my arms. I soon found myself ceasing to tell Russians what a nasty place it was they lived in. They knew better than I that they were unfree, that they were miserably poor (perhaps needlessly so), that their leaders lied to them, distorted facts and concealed information from them. Almost all of my dialogues with Russians illustrated the simple maxim that he who wears the shoe knows best where it pinches.

THERE WERE times last year when I was overcome by astonishment at the thought that the Orwellian vision of a society of politically lobotomized robots could ever have possessed the power to convince, even metaphorically, as it once did, and, apparently, still does. There, amidst people who were unfree and knew it, it seemed so inescapably simple that they should know it. Thinking Russians certainly have no illusions on this subject, and as a foreigner my relations with them were defined by its tensions.

Morda in Russian means "mug," and it is the term of derision applied to the type of face one suspects of belonging to someone who works at the "Big House" —a curious expression, this one, used to designate secret police headquarters and originating perhaps from the fact that in some Soviet cities the local M.V.D. headquarters is the largest edifice in town. Anyhow, looking for the *Morda* is the activity one engages in with Russian friends in the Soviet restaurant, and as soon as a likely physiognomy appears controversial talk ceases. Russians who are not overly given to nervousness seem to accept such facts of Soviet life without much mental wear and tear; but they never become habituated to them to the point of not understanding them for what they are.

There is a simple rule that Westerners observe with a Russian who fears the consequences of being known as one who has Western friends: never mention his name to other Russians. "It is not the thing among us to vouch for one another," I was instructed shortly after my arrival by an acquaintance who warned me to keep our association secret. If I had not known it before, this statement would have been enough to show that the distrust with which Russians regard one another disfigures not only their relations with Westerners but many aspects of their lives. I never met a Russian with the capacity to think unorthodox thoughts who did not understand that his fear of expressing these thoughts everywhere but in the immediate circle of his family or friends issued from a violation of his basic rights.

People who are besieged by a thousand such unnatural restrictions on their desire for knowledge, for self-development, or on their right to complain of essential political abuses, have no difficulty understanding the kind of society in which they live.

OF NOTE

THE DANGER OF "SACRAMENTALISM"

WRITING in the January, 1961 issue of *Worship* (Collegeville, Minnesota, $4 a year), Father Josef A. Jungmann, S.J., author of *The Mass of the Roman Rite,* discusses "The Eucharist and Pastoral Practice." An excerpt from that article follows:

The sacraments are being administered with edifying diligence and frequency. But there lurks a danger here of an attitude which holds that everything depends solely on the sacrament. In the Church of God there are areas where it is taken for granted that twenty minutes should suffice for a silent Mass; according to this way of thinking, it is important only that the Sacrifice be offered. All else, though it must be carried out because of rubrical law, lacks genuine religious significance, and therefore the more quickly and efficiently disposed of, the better.

The danger which threatens us here has sometimes been given the name of "sacramentalism." It is not a phenomenon of today only. There was a tendency towards it already in the late Middle Ages.

There was at that time an esteem for the sacrament of the Eucharist that has never been surpassed; and yet, simultaneously, active participation in the celebration of the Eucharist was at its lowest level. There was an ardent desire to receive the fruits and blessings of the Sacrament, but a corresponding participation, designed to realize those desires, was neglected.

After the Council of Trent this tendency could grow stronger in one direction only. It was necessary, in answer to the Reformers, to vindicate the principle of *opus operatum,* which holds that grace is effected provided the rite of the sacrament is validly performed. It was to be expected that this newly sharpened emphasis of theory also had its repercussions in practice and outlook.

Even after the unnatural accumulation of private Masses decreased with the disappearance of the "altarists" ("Mass priests"), the Mass and the Sacrament remained in relative isolation. During the Baroque period, attention was almost exclusively centered on the adoration of the Sacrament. This is especially noticeable when the very structure of some altars gave greater prominence to the throne of exposition than to the altar table.

Pope St. Pius X initiated an important move against this shifting of the center of gravity of eucharistic devotion, by encouraging frequent Communion. A distinguished religious writer of that time made the observation that, to this greater nearness to Christ brought about in the Sacrament, there must now correspond

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likewise a greater spiritual assimilation to Him, in harmony with the sacramental.

Some definite advances have since then been made in this matter. The movement for more frequent Communion has become an integral part of the liturgical movement, and has accordingly won a more solid context. And the liturgical movement, in turn, has been notably complemented by the idea of the kerygma and the reading of Scriptures—based on the recognition that the liturgy as the elevation of the soul to God presupposes a proper reception of the word which God has spoken to us; and that the *Eucharistia* will only then assume its right role in Christian life when it is at the same time the echo which the *Evangelium* has awakened in our hearts.

Theologically speaking, we are here confronted with the question of the correct relationship between the *opus operatum* and the *opus operantis,* between sacramental and personal piety. Sacramental piety may not be isolated; it must remain imbedded in the personal seeking after God.

This means not only that a proper disposition together with devout preparation is requisite for the reception of Holy Communion or the other sacraments; there must be likewise an over-all sound ordering of our lives in inner prayer and of worship. We must nurture an interior and vital nearness to Christ which reflects the conviction that we are united to Him at all times, even apart from the moment of sacramental reception or when kneeling before the tabernacle. The Christian's disposition and frame of mind must reflect that unity which is visibly expressed in the Sacrament.

It goes without saying that we must facilitate our people's access to the sacraments and especially to Mass, above all on Sundays. With the progess of time, far-reaching changes have taken place in this matter.

Towards the end of the Middle Ages the basic principle that on Sunday the entire parish assemble at a single common service of worship at "the third hour" was breached. The era of individualism had already at its very outset forced the substitution of another principle: that it was quite sufficient for a person to hear his Mass at any church and at any hour.

At the present time, a plurality of services is obviously necessary by reason of the large number of the faithful and the limited size and number of our churches. But hasn't this necessary adjustment been allowed sometimes to get out of hand—giving the impression almost of a bargain counter—so that there is danger of an "inflation" which threatens to devaluate even the most holy Sacrament? In a Catholic city of western Europe I came across a church which was emptied and refilled on Sundays, not every hour but every half hour! It is obvious that under such conditions there simply can be no question of a worthy and dignified service.

It is easy to ask questions. To come up with answers that take all the facts and circumstances into account is more difficult. There is also the danger of doing less than justice to the tireless zeal of holy priests who in regularly binating and trinating selflessly strive to be all things to all men. On the other hand, we cannot hope to change overnight the ways of thinking and the customs of the faithful; perhaps it cannot be done even within a generation. Hence, if we are expected to open up wider horizons, we should already now determine what are the crucial points at issue.

The mere multiplication of sacramental actions does not provide the answer to all questions. Besides the dimension of number there is also the dimension of depth, of personal involvement in the sacred action.

As has already been intimated, we should not allow ourselves to think of the Mass as embodying our *entire* worship, or to allow all else to be absorbed into it. We take for granted that steps lead up to the altar and elevate it above the level of the nave in order to emphasize its dignity. It is likewise consonant with right order that there be preparatory steps which lead us to an awareness of the importance of the sacramental acts.

For the most part, these are already indicated in the liturgy itself. This is true especially of the Mass. The real essence of the eucharistic celebration is the sacrifice which Christ offers; this is enveloped in the offering of the Church, which "we" present and through which we express our self-surrender to the will of God. Moreover, the sacrifice which we offer does not stand out in the Mass like a lonely peak; it is built up on the supporting foundation of the "remembrance" (the anamnesis) with which we recall the redeeming passion of Christ: *memores offerimus.* This same remembrance is in turn developed more expansively in the readings of the Fore-Mass, as also in the meditative chants which are interwoven with the flow of the Mass. And finally, the readings and chants are further unfolded in the ever-changing scenes of the liturgical year.

There is also no reason why the feasts and celebrations of the Church should exhaust themselves in the eucharistic celebration. Surely the Eucharist is the most holy Sacrament; but Scripture is holy, too, and a properly celebrated Bible hour can be a very beneficial form of worship. We will hold to the prescription that the Blessed Sacrament is to be reserved in a tabernacle on a main altar; but we are not therefore to conclude that a church becomes the house of God only by reason of the tabernacle. The prolix texts for the rite of consecration of a church, which may be regarded as a record of tradition, do not even mention the tabernacle among those things in a church which are to make the house of God holy.

The Eucharist will always remain the sun of the Church's life, and the celebration of holy Mass will always be the climax of the Church's worship. But let us not forget the steps which lead up to the altar.

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THE SCREEN

ROSINANTE TO THE ROAD AGAIN

EVEN THE moviegoer who doesn't attend foreign films very often has cause to be grateful for their appearance on our screens. They tend to pep up the local programs and often jolt the Hollywood producers into pepping up their own products. And some of the imports, like this week's offerings, although not top-drawer, have enough off-beat assets to attract even audiences who attend movies infrequently. Luis Bunuel, whose avant garde films of some thirty years ago made cinema history, isn't very avant garde in "The Young One," which he directed as if he had just discovered how mean and degrading race prejudice is. No doubt any movie that points out the evils of racism deserves commendation, but Bunuel, who also wrote the script with H. B. Addis, tells a story which is paradoxically so naive and so complex that it almost misses the main point.

Vaguely set on an isolated island in the Deep South, "The Young One" is mainly concerned with two characters: a Negro (Bernie Hamilton) who escapes to this lonely place after being falsely accused of raping a white woman on the mainland; and the island's game warden (Zachary Scott), a mean, Negro-hating bully who shoots the Negro's boat full of holes and would just as soon shoot the Negro. But the Negro, a musician of some sensitivity who considers the warden white trash, sums up the difference between him and his brutal persecutor with: "It's easy for him to kill me, but hard for me to kill him." Also involved in the conflict between these two men is a white servant girl of twelve or thirteen (Key Meersman) who is kind to the harassed Negro and who is seduced by the game warden. The situation is further complicated by the arrival of a minister (Claudio Brook), who hopes to take the orphaned girl to the mainland, and the driver of his launch (Grahan Denton), who discovers the hiding Negro and hopes to take him back to the mainland to be lynched. The game warden is only too anxious to cooperate in getting rid of the Negro and as brutally as possible—much to the horror of the minister, who deplores this inhumanity and who by now realizes what the warden has done to the girl. After battling with his conscience, the minister makes a deal with the warden and agrees not to report his crime on the mainland if he will help the Negro escape.

While some of the statements in Mr. Bunuel's parable are obvious, some are so deeply buried in plot that they never emerge. Well acted and handsomely photographed in Mexico, this is the first of Bunuel's films to have an American theme; but "The Young One," with its raw symbols and plethora of details during the course of its sermons on intolerance and prejudice, is more universal than American; and I suspect it is more popular abroad than it will be in this country.

CERVANTES' famous story about "the knight of the sorrowful countenance" isn't particularly adaptable to the movies, but the Russians have done a wonderful job with it. After a slow start, "Don Quixote," the last and best of the films to be distributed by the seven major film companies as part of the U.S.-U.S.S.R. Cultural Exchange Agreement, takes on a warmth and appeal that are irresistible. This is due largely to the artistry and loving care producer-director Grigory Kozintsev has bestowed on his picture, which was filmed in Crimea in wide-screen and lush color. This locale, with its plains and craggy hills, could be the very setting Cervantes described in his tales of seventeenth-century Spain and his loony hero who refuses to believe the days of the knights-errant are over. And Nikolai Cherkasov is practically perfect as the long, lean, armor-clad Don Quixote, who sallies forth to fight wrong and champion the oppressed. Equally effective although in a much different way is chubby Yuri Tolubeyev as Sancho Panza, the squire who plays along with the Don's fantasies and is devoted to the knight even when he insists a windmill is a giant. Although the first part of the film is slow, and at times a

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touch dull, the last half is so engrossing that one parts with this handsome production's fascinating characters with regret.

THE ENGLISH, who have a way of making a charming film out of practically nothing, have done it again in "Hand in Hand," an endearing little movie about two eight-year-olds. Under Philip Leacock's direction, the two youthful actors playing these leads do so well that they don't seem to be acting at all. Perhaps they aren't, but Master Philip Needs as a little Catholic boy and Miss Loretta Parry as a Jewish girl are so relaxed as the kids who first argue over each other's religion and then decide to attend both synagogue and church that they are a delight. Actually the religious differences as seen through the eyes of the children are over-simplified; but the conclusions are not exactly inaccurate. Producer Helen Winston successfully gave her picture an easy and unpretentious tone that fits the story; and the supporting cast, which includes John Gregson as a priest and Derek Sydney as a rabbi, as well as Sybil Thorndike and Finlay Currie in short episodes, never upstage the youngsters who carry the real load. "Hand in Hand" won't exactly make cinema history, but it'll give its customers a glow. PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

THE STAGE

NIGHT THOUGHTS ON AN OLD FRONTIER

THE RITUAL pieties with which the American theater receives a new musical initiate have lately been accorded "Do Re Mi" *(at the St. James),* and again one wants less the enlightenment of Aristotle and Lessing than of Miss Jessie Weston or Sir James Frazer. A notable array of *shamans* has been engaged in the fashioning of this particular Totem: Miss Betty Comden and Mr. Adolph Green, the diplomatically immune Isis and Osiris of the Broadway intelligentsia; the Mr. Jule Styne for whom, since "Gypsy," it's all been flowers, and supremely, the Fisher King himself, Mr. Garson Kanin, come to rejuvenate the land.

The metaphor palls, though not less than "Do Re Mi," yet it must be sustained to encompass the jubilant vegetation ceremonies of the press. Mr. Robert Coleman of the *Daily Mirror* allowed the event to be "a laugh frolic, a smasheroo." Mr. Dave Garroway—and *how* must he spend his nights?—pronounced it "the best evening in years." Mr. Earl Wilson, classically reminiscent, spoke of "a colossal triumph." The New York *Times,* vigilant ever to the dollar crisis, noted gravely: "There's gold in 'Do Re Mi.' " Mr. Ed Sullivan —momentarily distracted from waltzing bears and pyramids of muscle-bound Bulgarians—confined himself to the tersely grammatical: "roaring musical comedy." Yet Mr. Lee Mortimer, oblivious of the cholesterol margin, spoke for all when he gleefully announced the arrival of *"a great big fat hit!"*

It would be impossible to associate such expression with anything valuable in either thought or feeling, and indeed, intolerable to infer from it even an endearing or boozy euphoria. What at the very least it constitutes—if you will, that is, strain your perspective of Messrs. Wilson, Mortimer and Sullivan to the vanishing point—is most assuredly a new *trahison des clercs,* in which complicity public faith and professional responsibility are blatantly savaged. Nor can much more be said for Miss Comden and Mr. Green, Mr. Styne and Mr. Kanin. On an enterprise which might stand as a blueprint in How to Succeed Without Really Trying, they have conferred no distinction, and only the chromium-neon razzle-dazzle of the jukebox vacuity it chronicles. One hesitates to imagine what exhausted cynicism must underlie exposure of such clamorous mediocrity. Two hours traffic of the stage without authentic wit, gaiety, bawdry, loveliness of sound or spirit, arresting personality, good sense—what an achievement!

Seidlitz hysterics, of course, become The Commonweal even less than they do the *Daily Mirror* ("a laugh frolic, a smasheroo"), yet a season spent vagrant among the shades of "Tenderloin" and "Wildcat," "Molly Brown" and "Camelot," "Do Re Mi" and "The Conquering Hero," underscores the gravity of the point. For we are speaking here hardly of art, nor even "entertainment," nor "fun," nor (impotently) of commerce, but of something at once more subtle and more direct—a question of proportion. The American musical has become Frankenstein's monster, seeking everywhere whom and what it may devour. No equation exists any longer between it and a theater of more various intent: its trumpeting notoriety has effectively obliterated almost every alternative image of dramatic value. Annually, it dissipates prodigal sums of money in a heedless and compulsive pattern for which the only precedent would seem to be certain frenzies of the Stuart and Bourbon monarchs. Once designed to make joy visible, it has petrified into a ceremony as rigidly aseptic as automation, and its creators—once authentic light artists who caught, in Mr. Trilling's phrase, the "hum and buzz" of their culture's implications—have been superseded by the soulless efficiency experts of sensation, a league as threatening and tyrannous as any oligarchy of prudes or puritans. For the latter, pleasure, though to be distrusted, feared, even hated, is at least sensed as *real;* for the former, it is but a mechanical jerk into the void.

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Yet machines, however oiled and engineered, run down, like the doll Olympia in *Tales of Hoffmann,* and therein may lie some solace. For panic is clearly in the air, no matter how many *big fat smasheroo roaring colossal laugh frolics* are yet to come. It is there in the brassier brass, the dancers drizzling sweat, the tents of cloth of gold, those relentless smiles without a face. The panic is, in fact, everywhere, and from both sides of the pit, moving palpably in the acrid glare and through the drifts of boredom, rises the mutually desperate sigh of recognition: *Is this all there is to it?*

RICHARD HAYES.

BOOKS

The Self-Conscious Culture of Modern Mexico

WHERE THE AIR IS CLEAR. By Carlos Fuentes. Translated by Sam Hileman. Obolensky. $4.95.

By RICHARD GILMAN

TOWARD the beginning of Carlos Fuentes' big and energetic novel of contemporary Mexico, a character whose role is to articulate some of the author's central ideas, writes down these lines: "We do not feel ourselves part of any rational system we can feed or be fed by. Locked inside cloisters, backs turned on the world, we Mexicans cannot feel that either our works or our souls enter any logical order comprehensible to others and to ourselves."

A little further on: "Everything . . . has been the search, locked, blind, marginal, for some meeting between what we are and the forms that must be used to express our mute being."

And finally: "One does not explain Mexico. One believes in Mexico, with fury, with passion, and in alienation."

These avowals, in their earnestness, contradictory ambitions, half-inverted and half-aggressive vainglory, and rhetorical excess, quite thoroughly convey the intentions and flavor of Fuentes' book, as well as indicating its procedural difficulties and the causes of its ultimate failure to reach firm ground. The novel has been a sensation in Mexico, which isn't hard to understand, but it can only be something less than that here, although its seriousness and rough vitality make reading it by no means a waste of our time.

I cannot think of a more self-conscious culture than that of present-day Mexico, nor a literary atmosphere that is more agitated, stifling and fratricidal. This is important to know because in one of its intentions *Where the Air Is Clear* is an attempt to extricate a living imagination from the entombed, self-devouring realities of Mexican consciousness, forever mourning its sundered past, incessantly projecting its possible future shapes, and torn between its ill-defined authenticity and the directing pressure of more advanced societies, much as the nineteenth-century Russian mind was caught between panslavism and the cultured West.

Neither a Turgenev nor a Dostoyevsky, Fuentes presses for a transcendence of the quarrel. He proceeds first by a series of bitter portraits of Mexican salon life, where writers, artists and journalists mingle with the nouveau riche and the museum pieces of the older aristocracy, in a brittle Walpurgis Nicht of sensuality, chic French phrases, complaints about boredom, gossip, jockeying for position and interminable discussions about what it means to be Mexican. As set-pieces they are among the most impressive things in the novel.

But Fuentes is only incidentally a satirist, wishing, once that preliminary labor is out of the way, to understand and create images of the metamorphoses that the Mexican soul has undergone, to work his way through old mistiques in search of a more viable one, and finally to emerge at some point where form and experience cohere and cooperate to raise an adequate structure.

A surrogate for the author, one Ixca Cienfuegos (the Aztec and the Spanish; the surname, significantly, means "hundred fires") moves through the novel as a unifying consciousness, a force for the elicitation of truth and a bearer of possible transcendence. He listens to the storise of a dozen characters who are incarnations of Mexican personal history, constituting a typology of moral, psychological and social destiny: the ex-revolutionary turned tycoon; the aristocratic woman frozen in nostalgia and sexlessness; the hard ambitious girl from the provinces; the self-pitying unsuccessful poet; the aged avatar from Mexico's sub-history of dark gods; the lower-class youth itching murderously for some way to feel alive.

All of them function simultaneously on another level within the novel's narrative action, so that there is tension between their existence there and the deeper-going truth that Cienfuegos extracts from them. Interlocked, their destinies unfold in extreme violence and debacle; one by one the shameful and spurious routes to selfhood and maturity are blocked off, as their exemplars are made to lead themselves to the wall, while the innocent, the ones who have remained true to themselves, suffer deaths of terrifying meaninglessness.

Cienfuegos remains. Agonized by what he has seen and known, he shakes himself free to deliver a final invocation to the city which is "a table-land of jeweled death," "an unsteady pastiche," "anarchic," "deformed and scrofulous," but also built "in the true image of gigantic heaven." In a supreme attempt to sum up and hold steady the multiple centrifugal realities of Mexican experience, he speaks to the dust "which flees in constellations over all the city's profiles, over broken dreams and conquests, over old summits of headfeathers and blood, over domes of cross and

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iron, palaces of waltz and polka, over high walls which cover the view of mansions with swimming pool and three automobiles and bodies hidden among mink and diamonds: swift dust which folds all spoken and unspoken words."

But it doesn't really come off. The form and the experience don't quite hold together, so that whenever the novel moves from a direct vision of behavior, manners or psychology, it slips into a solipsistic world of manifestoes, occult reveries, private myth-making and overliterary hymns to life that never attain the *verbal* originality and imaginative coherence that might justify them.

What's more, there are certain thematic elements which I was simply unable to grasp. They have to do with a quest for identity through the truths of parenthood and through sexuality conceived of as a differentiating principle, and I suppose they fall under the *caveat* about Mexican works not entering any order comprehensible to others that I quoted above.

I shouldn't like to leave on that note, however. Fuentes says somewhere that "In Mexico City there is never tragedy, but only outrage," a remark that fixes the limits of his accomplishment. *Where the Air is Clear* attains to a sense of outrage, if not tragedy, but one so seriously felt and so passionately sponsoring its answering movement, that one ends by respecting its motives and at least part of its substance.

A Talking Poet

POEMS, 1930-1960. By Josephine Miles. Indiana. $3.95.

By VIVIAN MERCIER

SOME POETS sing, others talk, but a good poet of either kind develops a recognizable, individual voice. Josephine Miles is a talking poet, and one who employs a variety of idioms: she can talk like a Professor of English, which she is, or like a small-town neighbor, which she also is, or like a taxi-driver or a real-estate salesman or a radio announcer—all of whom she most emphatically is not. Yet the sensitive reader will come to perceive behind all the different syntaxes and vocabularies, the tones of the same authentic voice.

Perhaps it is rather the viewpoint that we recognize: that of someone who looks at the world directly, always wondering, sometimes troubled, never afraid. Even in Miss Miles' satirical poems we are never allowed to forget human decency:

> But we didn't know what to give
> Oedipus; he had everything.
> Even in his loss, he had more
> than average.
> So we gave him a traveling case,
> fitted, which we personally
> Should have liked to receive.

The gesture was inadequate but well-meant, like most of our responses to life.

Sometimes Miss Miles can make very moving poetry out of inadequacy, as in "Height":

> Shoulder to head is the height of
> my life to me.
> My level eye
> Looks to his rib as his long and
> level eye
> Looks to the sky.

Or again in the second of "Four Songs":

> Unreasonable happiness troubles
> me.
> I look at my round face
> And I see, unreasonable happiness
> Is my disgrace.

"Unreasonable Happiness" might serve as an alternative title for the whole volume, which takes such keen pleasure in the human condition while remaining conscious of all its shortcomings.

And then again, Miss Miles often shows us that our responses are not quite so inadequate as we may think; she finds in everyday phrases a poetry that we had overlooked. The newsboy crying *"Herald,* sir?" is himself a herald announcing the new day and perhaps even some new light. A piece of market jargon, "cotton gray goods quiet and firmer," is seen as a line of poetry, charged with metaphor. There is poetry even in the misleading claims of advertisers, and pathos in their injunction by the Federal Trade Commission:

> They say La Jac Brite Pink Skin
> Bleach avails not,
> They say its Orange Beauty Glow
> does not glow,
> Nor the face grow five shades
> lighter nor the heart
> Five shades lighter. They say no.
> Though all things human leave

Miss Miles a shade disappointed, the American landscape never lets her down, whether it be her own California in "After This, Sea" or the exotic remainder of the country in "Brooklyn, Iowa and West." Even a motel or a trailer court can fashion security for her once she is on the road:

> It was the tent and citadel of the
> many stars
> It was the rampant of the loud
> highway
> And we slept there, waking
> Into the thunder and silence of
> the unfolding
> Durable journey.

This is Walt Whitman's America, but the people who inhabit it do not always reassure her as they did Whitman. They do not always compare well with the men Michelangelo painted or carved; too often they have

> Smooth faces, smooth smooth
> faces
> Good mood good personality
> faces . . .
>
> Round bland planned personality faces. . . .

But if Miss Miles is critical, she is also compassionate, toward Americans and toward all men. As her sedate voice talks on, in deceptively simple words, we see the world as it is, in all its beauty and irony, taking shape before our eyes.

> Men have their alien sons and
> love them,
> The dear fist clenched in theirs,
> The foreign taste fed at their
> table . . .
>
> But they hate the foreign, though
> an open
> Five-fingered hand like theirs,
> The gall taste deep as another
> nation,
> The ugly accent in an alien name.
> Hate all but him, dear father,
> and dear son.

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Family of Marvels

THROUGH THE FIELDS OF CLOVER. By Peter De Vries. Little, Brown & Co. $3.95.

By WILLIAM JAMES SMITH

PETER De VRIES is the greatest novelist of all times. Or at least the greatest living novelist. Certainly the greatest living American comic novelist, if you want to be really onerous in your restrictions. And beyond any doubt the greatest punster the world has ever known. Joyce wrote a novel to accommodate a thousand puns but only De Vries has written an entire novel to house a single resplendent *mot*. His study of clerical life (and perhaps his best book), *The Mackerel Plaza,* was written so that the Reverend Mackerel could remark sadly to the effect that there is no jack in the pulpit.

De Vries' latest work will add to his greatness without appreciably changing its character. Ben and Alma Marvel, in the pleasant town of Hickory, Mass., decide to celebrate their fortieth wedding anniversary with a reunion of their multifariously wedded and divorced offspring, and the story is off to the usual De Vries barrage of puns and anagrams and outrageous clichés and unkind observations. Few characters in the history of the novel have suffered the indignities that De Vries assaults his creatures with, and it is a tribute to their vigor that they refuse to submit to his maniacal flailings and cavorting and assert themselves as real, if grievously abused, characters. Ben has been leading a life of precarious leisure because earlier in life scientific testing discovered he was executive material in a company that had no need of executives. Alma, the usual grand collection of malapropism, deplores Communism because it smacks of socialism. Son Ben (the Literary One) is writing a play entitled "The Seven Who Stank" and hates nature, human and otherwise.

My favorite Marvel, however, is Bushrod, the family Liberal, who is lured home to the reunion with the lie that there is some local anti-Semitism that he can combat (Mr. Aronson turns out to be a Swede and ends up suspiciously asking Bushrod, "You a Yew?"). The Young Love Department is conducted by a granddaughter and assorted swains, notably by a professional gagman and Bad Indian named Prufrock (translation of Rolling Stone).

Hickory might very well be any of the other of Mr. De Vries' pleasant little New England towns (Decency or Avalon or industrial Chickenfoot). Its primary concern is not social or economic but marital. About that Mr. De Vries and Alma Marvel worry a great deal. De Vries can't stop punning long enough to give it any really serious consideration, but Alma can and she's come to some sort of conclusion, however unenlightening: "Because if they want to blame us, we can blame our parents, and they theirs, and so on, and nobody will ever take any responsibility for anything!"

Prufrock, the Bad Indian, wooing in an Age of Criticism, is pessimistic too: "All I know is, tomorrow will be tough. Me not holding out hope. Me holding out my hand." As De Vries says, if Prufrock's namesake can reach you way out there in Saginaw, Michigan, there isn't much hope for the human race.

American Saint

IMMIGRANT SAINT: The Life of Mother Cabrini. By Pietro DiDonato. McGraw-Hill. $4.95.

By PHILIP BURNHAM

SAINT Francesca Xavier Cabrini is the saint most immediate to contemporary Americans. She died in Chicago only in 1917, was beatified in 1938, and canonized by Pope Pius XII in 1946. In a fairly brief and rather strained chronicle, Pietro DiDonato gives the rush of day-to-day movement and interest and accomplishment which Mother Cabrini so recently created here in our own headlong society.

This society at the turn of the century was notably looser, less integrated and less rationalized than now. There was more leeway. Cost accounting, taxes, and rules and regulations were still restricted enough to encourage more surprising initiatives from the smallest beginnings, more flagrant failures, and more dramatic successes. Conductors could give free trolley rides to beguiling nuns, and park policemen could appropriate municipal flowers for orphans, with no scandal taken. A hospital could start off with hardly a store-bought sheet or pillow-case and with only a dozen bottles of donated miscellaneous medicines. Push-cart peddlers and neighborhood store-owners could give a bundle of modest merchandise in charity without accounting to authority or too greatly jeopardizing their own security. Social security, indeed, was a far more rudimentary concept and remote attainment. Rich people amassed money unhampered by income taxes, and sometimes more "irresponsibly" than now gave it away . . . especially when Mother Cabrini had a "dream" and walked into their office or their home.

It is easy for the author to show the thorough "Americanism" of the country's only citizen-saint. This is true despite her Italian birth and youth and her constant work and travels abroad in Europe and Central and South America. She was an extraordinarily active woman with the sort of direct, pragmatic charity which is easy to confuse with humanitarianism. She was most satisfactorily successful: in twelve years the Institute she founded—the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart—had fourteen houses and 200 nuns. After twenty-five years, there were 1,000 sisters in fifty houses. "There were 5,000 orphans and thousands of pupils who fondly called her Mother, 100,000 patients who had been treated in her hospitals. . . ."

As administrator, Mother Cabrini was undoubtedly a genius, near an ideal American pattern. She had a firm and serene sense of priorities,

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unlimited energy and an overpowering urge to know and participate in all the varieties of work her Institute undertook. At the same time she quickly and successfully delegated authority and encouraged—often really forced—local initiative and responsibility. She was a tremendous morale-builder and publicist, a sure judge of character and capacity, and a master at obtaining collaborators from every political, economic and social class and from almost every classification of Catholic, Protestant, Jew and agnostic. She was optimistic; she was loved and popular—certainly a most triumphant American as well as Christian.

At the same time, Mr. DiDonato undertakes to present her as an ideal "underdog," with resources never equalling her needs, with various unfriendly pressures hampering her, forced always to amazing enterprise and improvisation. Certainly she suffered illness, overwork, and the poverty of her Order and of her people, but the handicaps the author stresses are less solidly depicted than the heart-warming aids which she enlisted. She is our "immigrant" saint, to be sure, and the immigrants were at the bottom of the heap. Yet the situation of the new Italian-Americans was not so pathetic and saddened by specific discrimination as to check the great tide of their immigration, nor, probably, to justify a certain righteous querulousness in this book. Mother Cabrini was never psychologically or practically much troubled by being "an immigrant." Her hardest time, in fact, was suffered in Codogno, Tuscany, at her first assignment as a religious, before ever seeing the Ocean.

The sanctity of Mother Cabrini, as it must be with all saints, is harder to approach than her active career. There is always a basic mystery. As a child at Confirmation, "I felt that which can never be described. From that moment I was no longer on the earth. My heart began to grow through space ever with purest joy. I cannot tell why, but I knew the Holy Ghost had come to me."

Mother Cabrini was not deceived, nor was Pope Leo XIII, her great patron, nor the vast numbers of simple and complex people who all her life recognized in her person the loving presence and power of charity . . . even when they did not admit the overwhelming presence of Grace.

Her piety and her holiness were, it appears from this study, "Salesian" in their freedom from elaborate, set patterns and their expansion in whatever active works were put before her hand. Saint Teresa of Avila, great Founder and greater Mystic, was a saint Mother Cabrini especially reverenced and consciously followed. In these pages it is not always clear what is a direct quotation from Frances Cabrini and what is an imagined reflection or conversation, but there are enough identified passages from her numerous letters to see the religious and mystical concentration upon which her active life was built. She thought and wrote with much of the élan of Saint Teresa of Avila, and she applied her insight and teaching in much the intimate and immediate

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and universal way of Saint Thérèse of Lisieux.

Considerable of the imagery is fairly extreme for worldly northerners. The author emphasizes this relentlessly, especially the mystical, connubial figures: a nun is practically never a nun, but always a "Bride"; the Lord God is seldom the Holy Trinity, but unendingly "Spouse." The form of the book is almost an itinerary, with brief reflective and explanatory stops, which proves suitable and effective for Mother Cabrini's constantly moving life. The style, however, is strongly mannered, with archaisms on the one hand, and with lyric, italicized psychological plunges, on the other. There are too many incidental mistakes in geography, history and grammar which the editors let go in the turbulence of the narrative. But the book is bravely done: the tale's the thing, and in hagiography, it is the Saint.

REVIEWERS

Richard Gilman, a regular contributor, has written for *Poetry*, the *Chicago Review*, *Horizon* and other publications.

Vivian Mercier teaches English and Comparative Literature at City College, New York.

William James Smith, a frequent contributor, is an editor of *Atomic Industrial Forum*, a magazine devoted to the industrial uses of atomic energy.

Philip Burnham, formerly one of the editors of The Commonweal, remains a frequent contributor.

ART

Treasures of Thailand

A MAJOR exhibition of a relatively minor achievement in the history of art can be wholly justified by "Art Treasures of Thailand." Displayed abroad for the first time, these treasures offer the American public a good look at fourteen centuries of the art of a region hitherto best known popularly through "Anna and the King of Siam." One may feel that Siam's claim to aesthetic fame rests securely on the "upleaping bargeboards" and the overlapping roofs that A. B. Griswold remarks are "the glory of Siamese architecture," but the reflections of greater Oriental forms that can be seen in most of these beautiful, decorative or charming objects are nonetheless precious to add to the experience of art that stimulates artist and public.

The chief feature of this exhibit is the sculpture—few paintings survive the Thai climate for long—and it offers 150 examples, from the sixth to the twentieth century. The most "important" of these works are in the large group of Buddha images, which display some of the best and the worst of the characteristics of Siamese art. At their best they reflect their Indian (chiefly) or Chinese prototypes with an arcane or elegant coherence; at their worst they are empty affectations. The tendency over the centuries towards refinement of forms and towards decorative elaboration was in the end not kind to the Siamese Buddha image.

The strong desire of the Oriental artist to copy rather than invent new images of the Buddha was definitive in the history of Buddhist art, but the inclination of the Siamese was somewhat to dilute rather than absorb influence, particularly in the later centuries. This world of the Siamese Buddha is an expressive shadow of "that invincible legendary universe" that Malraux tells us the images of the Buddha in the Orient impose.

Among the finest Buddhas in the exhibit is the Standing Buddha in stone of the Dvaravati period (seventh to eighth century) whose hands are broken off. The rather broad "Mon" features are stylized in stern harmony with the crown of hair and the lines of the veil-like drapery: the slight figure expresses a collected, mysterious force. A much later Head of a Buddha Image (stone with traces of red lacquer; Ayudhya style, probably seventeenth century) is almost effete in its stylization, but it is splendidly

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coherent and has a Modigliani-like elegant expressiveness. Another Ayudhya work of about the same period in wood has typically Chinese features and the same fully realized elegance.

A Walking Buddha (which seems almost like a contradiction in terms!) of the fourteenth century Sukhodaya style represents the one startling innovation of Thai Buddhist art. Although it is derived from Indian cave-mural representations of the Buddha walking, the Sukodaya is said to have "invented" the free-standing image of the Buddha in this posture—really a pause in the act of walking. But this golden-bronze Walking Buddha in the exhibit (cat. no. 77) is typical in my opinion of the worst aspect of Siamese art: it is "slick," perfunctory and affectedly decorative.

Among the works that seemed freshest and most fascinating to me were some not dedicated to the highest purpose; usually they were also among the earliest centuries of Thai art.

For instance, a stone relief fragment (Lopburi style, around the eleventh century) called "Five Persons in a Pavillion" shows a series of little dynamic figures in a rhythmic pattern of kinetic poses that is a real delight. A tiny, lively bronze Dancing Figure (Lopburi), a Hunchback (ceramic) a Spouted Pot in the Form of a Toad, the flat sinuous Torso of a Divinity (Dvaravati), Demons, Angels, Mythological Beasts—all these minor objects seemed to me to glow with creative conviction and to display a sort of medieval exuberance and a genius for expressive line.

There is a pervasive suppleness and gaiety about these fourteen centuries of Thai art that is one of the most endearing things about this exhibition. Even the Buddha of Siam, dedicated to being as everywhere the "serene image of a meditation," has a smile of particular sweetness and lightness. Perhaps the conclusive demonstration of these Siamese affinities is the innovation of the Buddha *walking* in the Sukodaya period. Whether it was successfully realized or not in that instance, it is certainly a sign of an overwhelming disposition, a case of an irresistible force moving an immovable object.

The exhibition, organized under the auspices of the Government of Thailand and the University of Indiana, had its premiere in Bloomington, Indiana, and will be at the Metropolitan Museum in New York City until February 19th. Later it will tour the country (see schedule).

BETTY KAUFMAN.

Art Treasures of Thailand

March 12–April 23
Museum of Fine Arts, Boston
May 14–June 11
Toledo Museum of Art
July 9–Aug. 13
Los Angeles County Museum
Sept. 10–Oct. 8
Seattle Art Museum
Nov. 5–Dec. 17
California Palace of the Legion of Honor, San Francisco
Jan. 1–March 3, '62
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A Note for Press Month

Of all the efforts that have been made to summarize this magazine's point of view, perhaps the thumbnail description that comes the closest to the truth remains the statement that The Commonweal represents "not a movement but an attitude." That attitude is a Catholic attitude, and The Commonweal is generally referred to as a Catholic publication, although it is not, to use the term people apply to diocesan papers and magazines published by religious communities, an "official" Catholic publication. Rather, The Commonweal is, quite simply, a magazine published by men who are themselves Catholic and who endeavor to express a point of view on temporal matters in conformity with their religious principles. . . .

Since the editors of this magazine are laymen, its primary concern is with the temporal order, which is the specific province of the layman. In the light of their religious beliefs, the editors see the temporal order as being directly related to the spiritual, and their day-to-day judgments reflect this conviction. Add to this the further fact that contributors to The Commonweal include many of the world's ablest Catholic writers, and it is not hard to see what distinguishes this magazine from comparable "secular" journals and why the magazine is generally thought of as Catholic. But there is nothing more "officially" Catholic about The Commonweal than this, and the editors have always gone to some lengths to make this fact quite clear. . . .

There is no secret about the fact that The Commonweal frequently represents a minority point of view—or at least a point of view quite different from that found in many diocesan papers and Catholic magazines. For example, the editors were—and are—unable to share the enthusiasm of most American Catholic publications for Generalissimo Franco. In Father Coughlin's era The Commonweal saw his *Social Justice* as intolerant and totalitarian in spirit, and said so. More recently while some "official" Catholic publications heaped praise on Senator McCarthy and scorn upon his critics, the editors of this magazine viewed his "crusade" in a context of national fear and self-doubt and felt it had little to do with any rational means of dealing with the Communist threat.

That our opinions on such public questions drew criticisms and disagreement from other Catholics did not surprise us. . . . There is nothing extraordinary about the fact that Catholics frequently disagree on specific questions of the day. Indeed, the only extraordinary thing would be if this were not the case. But what is disturbing is the way some Catholics try to elevate personal judgments on passing events or political figures into dogmas of orthodoxy which all must hold if they are not to be labeled "pseudo" or "so-called" Catholics. —from the 35th Anniversary issue

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